

VZCZCXRO3395
RR RUEHJO
DE RUEHMB #0307 3131447
ZNY CCCCC ZZH
R 091447Z NOV 09
FM AMEMBASSY MBABANE
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC 3774
INFO RUEHOR/AMEMBASSY GABORONE 0006
RUEHSB/AMEMBASSY HARARE 0151
RUEHKI/AMEMBASSY KINSHASA 0017
RUEHLO/AMEMBASSY LONDON 0050
RUEHLS/AMEMBASSY LUSAKA 0421
RUEHTO/AMEMBASSY MAPUTO 1190
RUEHSA/AMEMBASSY PRETORIA 2756
RUEHTN/AMCONSUL CAPE TOWN 0595
RUEHSAD/AMCONSUL DURBAN 0436
RUEHJO/AMCONSUL JOHANNESBURG 0423

C O N F I D E N T I A L MBABANE 000307

SIPDIS

E.O. 12958: DECL: 11/09/2014
TAGS: [PGOV](#) [PREL](#) [PINR](#) [WZ](#) [ZI](#) [BC](#)
SUBJECT: SWAZI DEPUTY PRIME MINISTER PESSIMISTIC ON CHANCES
FOR SUCCESS OF ZIMBABWE'S UNITY GOVERNMENT

Classified By: Ambassador Earl M. Irving
for reasons. 1.4 (b) and (d).

¶1. (C) I spent an hour and a half with Swazi Deputy Prime Minister Themba N. Masuku on November 2. An appointed Senator, Masuku joined the present government in his current capacity in August 2008, when he was recalled from his position as an international civil servant in the U.S. He told me that his principal responsibility was for the social welfare of Swaziland, in particular the well-being of children, the elderly, minorities (whites, people of mixed race and the disabled) and veterans, and to manage the day to day business of cabinet. I asked him whether he had any substantive responsibility for foreign affairs and he responded only insofar as he oversaw the work of cabinet. I asked if he had been briefed on the Foreign Minister Lutfo Dlamini's trip to Zimbabwe on October 30 and he answered in the negative. He noted that on October 19 he had been in Uganda representing King Mswati III at the African summit on refugees, and had sat next to Zambian President Rupiah Banda, who was seated next to Zimbabwean President Robert Mugabe at dinner. Mugabe explained to Banda that "the problem with Tsvangirai is that he doesn't know he can't get everything he wants when he wants it." Banda tried to tell Mugabe to step back from the matter and be more flexible in handling the government of national unity, but the Zimbabwean got his back up and made it clear that that conversation was over. Masuku was shocked to see how arrogantly Mugabe had abruptly cut off a fellow head of state. "Even though (Mugabe) can be quite lucid at times, I think he's losing it," the Swazi Deputy Prime Minister observed. Masuku continued that the Zimbabwean government of national unity was destined to fail because it consisted of two political parties with clearly different and irreconcilable agendas, and questioned whether the tripartite alliance in South Africa might not be headed for a similar fate. He cautioned that those were his own views and not those of his government.

¶2. (C) Masuku also had some brick bats for Botswana's President Ian Khama. He noted that the president was a military man through and through and had packed his cabinet with fellow military officers. "According to information I've received, it's getting more difficult to be in Botswana," he concluded.

¶3. (C) Comment and Bio: Themba Masuku was born on July 7, 1950, in Hlathikhulu, Swaziland. In 1998 Masuku joined the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) as Director of the FAO Liaison Office in Geneva, a position he held until 2007. In 2008 he was transferred to New York. Between 1991 and 1996 he served as a member of parliament and minister in

several cabinet portfolios; first as Minister of Agriculture and Cooperatives (91-93) and Minister for Economic Planning and Development (93-96). In 1996 King Mswati III appointed Masuku Minister of Finance, from which portfolio he resigned in 1998 to take up his duties at the FAO. Masuku holds a Master of Science in Agriculture and Mechanization, a degree he earned from the University of Missouri as a USAID scholarship recipient in 1983. In 1989 he graduated from the University of South Africa with a diploma in Industrial Relations. Masuku is a technocrat and rarely ventures a political opinion in public, although he enjoys the confidence of the king. His views on Zimbabwe square with those we have heard of others in government who are close to the subject. His comment on the state of Botswana was news to me, however. End Comment and Bio.

IRVING